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ABSTRACT

This case study, part of the State Structures for the Governance of Higher Education study, focuses on governance and related issues in Georgia's higher education system. The study's overall purpose was to examine differences among states in their governance structures, and to determine if differences in performance were related to governing structures and whether structure affects strategies of state policymakers. The study is based on analysis of documents and on interviews conducted in 1995 and 1996 with state officials, education administrators, faculty, and staff. The first section provides information on the state, including the economic situation and political context. Section 2 examines the characteristics and history of higher education in Georgia, including the University System of Georgia, system characteristics, private colleges and universities, the Department of Technical and Adult Education, and student financial aid. Section 3 examines the work processes involved in the state system. These include strategic planning initiatives, the budget process, the program review and approval process, information systems, the required Regents examination for prospective graduates, and transfer and articulation. Concluding observations in the final section are generally positive. Appended is a list of national advisory committee members. (Contains 42 references.) (DB)

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STATE STRUCTURES FOR THE GOVERNANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Georgia Case Study Summary

A Report from

THE CALIFORNIA HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY CENTER

Spring 1997

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State Structures for the Governance of Higher Education

Georgia Case Study Summary

By Kathy Reeves Bracco

Spring 1997

A Technical Paper Prepared for
State Structures for the Governance of Higher Education
and
The California Higher Education Policy Center

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Preface

State Structures for the Governance of Higher Education is a national research project concerning state governing structures for higher education. This project was conducted by The California Higher Education Policy Center with support from The Pew Charitable Trusts and The James Irvine Foundation. The purpose of the research is to better understand how states differ in the design of their governance structures, what difference in performance can be related to choice of governing structures, and how structure affects the strategies available to state policy makers with regard to the state's higher education system.

The products of the study include nine different publications: seven case studies, a comparative report, and an annotated bibliography. The *case studies* provide separate summaries of higher education governance for the seven states in this project: California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, New York, and Texas. The state systems of higher education examined in these studies include public and private postsecondary institutions as well as the arrangements for regulating, coordinating and funding them. Case study research was conducted between September 1994 and September 1996. For each state, researchers collected documents, examined archival data, and conducted interviews to obtain multiple sources of information about context, system design, governance structures, and performance. Over 200 interviews were conducted with state legislators, legislative staff, representatives from the Governor's office, representatives from state budget and research agencies, state higher education agency officials, system and institutional presidents, chancellors and board members, and faculty. Documents reviewed include state budgets, master plans, statistical reports, board agendas, system histories, and newspaper accounts. All case study reports were reviewed for accuracy by knowledgeable individuals within the state.

Following the completion of the case study reports, a *comparative study* was developed to provide an interpretive synthesis of the data in the case studies. An *annotated bibliography* has been compiled to highlight relevant literature on governance in higher education, government, business, and K–12 education. The bibliography also includes several theoretical pieces that helped to frame the conceptual design of the research.

Throughout the project, the research team was guided by the advice of a National Advisory Committee comprised of 18 experts in higher education governance issues. We would like to thank each of the committee members for their assistance in this project (their names are listed in the Appendix to this case study). In addition, we wish to thank the following individuals for

their assistance in reviewing drafts of the case studies: Kenneth Ashworth, William Barba, Joseph Burke, Raymond Cardozier, Patrick Dallet, Cameron Fincher, Edward Hines, David Leslie, Marvin Peterson, William Pickens, Stephen Portch, Jack Smart, and Richard Wagner.

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This case study synthesizes interview data with other sources to paint a descriptive picture of governance and related issues facing Georgia's system of higher education. It is based on documents gathered from public offices, higher education institutions and relevant publications. Interviews with state officials, education administrators, board members, faculty, and staff took place in June and November of 1995 and January of 1996.

State Context

With 7.1 million people, Georgia is the tenth most populous state in the country and the smallest of the seven states in this study of governance structures. Georgia has grown significantly over the last two decades. The Olympic games, accompanied by a strong economy and a substantial in-migration (particularly into the Atlanta metropolitan area), have made Georgia one of the most economically vibrant of the 50 states over the past several years.

As Table 1 indicates, Georgia has one of the lowest per capita incomes (at $21,300) of any of the seven states in this study, but it also has a lower-than-average percentage of its population in poverty. Georgians are about average relative to other study states in terms of the percentage of its population with a baccalaureate or professional degree, as well as the number of new high school graduates per 1,000 population.

Table 1

Contextual Variables for Georgia Compared to Selected States

(Numbers in Percentages Represent Rank Among the Seven Study States)

Contextual Variables	*High (1–2)*	*Average (3–5)*	*Low (6–7)*	*U.S. Average*
Population (in Millions) (1995)			7.2 (7)	
Per Capita Income (in Thousands) (1995)			$21.3 (6)	$22.8
Potential Tax Revenue (1995–96)*†		97 (4)		100
New High School Graduates per 1,000 Population (1995–96)†		9.2 (4)		9.4
Role of Private Higher Education§			Limited	
Role of Governor‡		Moderate		
% of Population with Associate Degree (1990)			5.0 (7)	6.2
% of Population with Baccalaureate Degree (1990)		12.9 (5)		13.1
% of Population with Graduate or Professional Degree (1990)		6.4 (5)		7.2
% of Population 24 Years Old or Younger (1995)		36.9 (3)		35.5
% of Population that is Anglo (1990)			71.0 (6)	80.3
% of Population Who Do Not Speak English in Home (1990)			4.8 (7)	13.8
% of Population in Poverty (1994)			14.0 (6)	14.5
High School Dropout Rate (1992 to 1994 Average)		10.0 (4)		9.0

* This figure is expressed as an Index: National Average = 100.

Sources: Unless otherwise noted, data are drawn from *Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac* 43, no. 1 (September 1996), pp. 51–52.

† From K. Halstead, *State Profiles for Higher Education 1978 to 1996: Trend Data* (Washington, D.C.: Research Associates of Washington, 1996), pp. 21, 24.

§ From Task Force on State Policy and Independent Higher Education, *The Preservation of Excellence in American Higher Education: The Essential Role of Private Colleges and Universities* (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 1990), p. 35.

‡ From J. M. Burns, J. W. Peltason, and T. E. Cronin, *State and Local Politics: Government by the People* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1990), p. 113.

Throughout our interviews, "change" was the word used most often to describe the current environment in Georgia. According to individuals we interviewed, the state is "in transition," "changing rapidly," and "in a period of evolution." Some of this transformation is due to in-

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migration from across the country. Changes have also been occurring because of the spotlight that the 1996 summer Olympics brought to the state. The excitement generated by the Olympics, the World Series (Atlanta won the title in 1995) and the strong economy created a very upbeat environment for almost everyone we spoke with during our site visits.

State demographics are reflecting a population shift from rural to urban areas, due particularly to the growth of corporate headquarters in Atlanta, such as CNN, Delta Airlines, UPS, and Coca Cola. The population of Georgia is heavily concentrated in the northern part of the state, especially the Atlanta area. This is also the part of the state that is growing most rapidly. Georgia experienced growth rates of close to 20 percent in the 1980s, and is expected to continue to grow, adding an additional 900,000 residents in each of the next three decades.[1] The southern part of the state is growing, but not nearly at the same rate as the north. The differences between regions of the state was characterized by one politician who said, "Take Atlanta out of Georgia and you would have Mississippi." There are many divisions in the state, including urban-rural, north-south, and sub-regional ones, that make any type of statewide coordination complex. The changing nature of the demographics transforms the expectations for higher education as well.

Almost everyone we spoke with agreed that in Georgia, education in general and higher education in particular have recently been the beneficiaries of a strong economy and a supportive Governor. A state that has historically not shown a great deal of support for higher education (over 80 percent of Georgia citizens do not complete any formal educational program beyond high school[2]) Georgia is now shifting new resources into higher education and trying to raise aspirations and expectations of students to enter the state's colleges and universities.

Economic Situation

"State finances in Georgia are in excellent shape," according to a recent national publication on state policy.[3] Employment growth in the state during the early 1990s was more than 12 percent, compared to a national average increase of 3 percent for the same period.[4] State revenues are drawn from a mix of income, sales, and property taxes. Most people we spoke with believe that the state's economy is strong and would continue its growth for several years, but there have been some predictions of an economic downturn. State officials noted that state revenue increases are projected to slow over the next four to five years. Just as these projections were being released, the state passed a tax reduction package that will essentially eliminate the sales tax on food over a three-year period, causing many to fear even further revenue declines.

To address potential revenue declines, the Governor called on all state agencies in the 1996 budget process to develop a proposal to redirect five percent of their budgets. All agencies were to find five percent of their previous year's budget that could be eliminated; then, they were to propose how they would reinvest that five percent in their highest priority areas. In their overall

budget request, agencies were directed to ask for no more than a 6.5 percent increase (the estimated rate of economic growth) over their budget for the previous fiscal year; salaries and capital projects were not included as part of this limit. Depending on how the Governor and General Assembly assessed their redirection of funds, agencies could expect to receive from 95 to 106.5 percent of the previous year's budget.

After the decline in state appropriations in the early 1990s, the University System of Georgia enjoyed increases in state appropriations of 6, 13 and 20 percent for fiscal years 1993, 1994 and 1995, respectively.[5] Table 2 shows the amount and percentage of the state budget for the University System of Georgia for selected years.

Table 2

State Appropriations and Percent of State Budget For the University System of Georgia

(Selected Years Only)

	1985	*1990*	*1994*	*1995*
State Appropriations (In Millions)	$634.6	$913.3	$1,061.3	$1,274.6
Percent of State Budget	14.5%	11.9%	11.5%	12.5%

Source: University System of Georgia, *Information Digest 1994–95* (Atlanta: 1996), p. 71.

Political Context

Governor

In Georgia the Governor has moderate influence constitutionally.[6] The Governor's greatest influence comes from the line item veto (which is exercised regularly) and appointment powers. Since the current Governor, Democrat Zell Miller, is in his second term, he is unable to succeed himself in 1998. Prior to his election he served 16 years as Lieutenant Governor. The key component of his first gubernatorial campaign called for the establishment of a lottery whose proceeds would support education. This was a tough sell to some in Georgia who saw gambling as conflicting with their religious beliefs, but he was elected nonetheless. Miller was reelected in 1994 by a very slim margin and most believe that his education initiatives were what carried him to reelection. Miller is described as "middle of the road," "pragmatic," and able to work successfully with legislators from both political parties.[7]

Several observers noted that Miller has been able to take political issues away from his opponents. One example is privatization, an issue that has been widely portrayed as backed by Republicans, but one that Miller has taken into his own hands. Miller formed a commission to

examine privatization in early 1995.[8] Under the Miller administration, parks, computer services, medical facilities, and prisons are all candidates for privatization.[9] Privatization talk has spread to higher education as well, according to several respondents, and there have been some discussions of privatizing the state's student aid agency.

A second example of Miller's taking "Republican" issues as his own is the recently enacted tax cut: the General Assembly in 1995 passed a tax cut proposal at the very last hour only to have it vetoed by the Governor on the grounds that it was unconstitutional. However, it was clear at that time that the tax cut issue would be back in 1996, this time as the Governor's initiative. The Governor did propose a tax reduction package in January 1996 that was swiftly passed by the Assembly.

While the Governor's office in Georgia is said to have only moderate power constitutionally, the Governor can have a great deal of influence over higher education, according to most individuals we spoke with. Specifically, the Governor appoints the members of the Board of Regents, the statewide governing board for the University System of Georgia. In addition, the Governor has significant influence over the amount of money that higher education receives during the budget process. Governor Miller and others have been referred to as "education Governors" who have made a real difference for higher education. A long-time university administrator said that when Georgia has had a Governor that understood higher education, things have happened. Many attributed Miller's experience as a college professor before entering politics as one reason that he has been so supportive of higher education. His second inaugural speech focused exclusively on education issues. One legislator said, "He has a commitment to education that is not just political rhetoric." This commitment is most evident in his designation of lottery funds to education, and specifically through his creation of the HOPE scholarship program, which has now become a model for a national scholarship effort.[10]

General Assembly

The General Assembly (the formal name for the Georgia Legislature) consists of 236 legislators, including 56 senators and 180 representatives. All seats are up for reelection every two years. In 1995–96, both houses had a Democratic majority (35 to 21 in the Senate and 114 to 66 in the House), though the Republicans gained significant numbers of seats in the 1994 elections.[11] The General Assembly is in session 40 days every year.

According to one respondent, the high turnover of legislators over the last four to six years has left no towering figures for higher education in the General Assembly. In general, however, the Assembly was described as supportive of higher education. The key positions in the General Assembly for higher education, according to one legislative staff member, include the Speaker of the House, the Lieutenant Governor, the chairs of the Appropriations Committees, and the chairs of the Higher Education Committees. According to one University System representative, the Governor and General Assembly have a significant influence on higher

education because they "are responsible for funding the system and for setting the expectations of the public."

At the time of our visit there was a good relationship between the University System of Georgia and the General Assembly, and reportedly good communication between the chancellor of the University System and the key legislators. Essentially, the University System is responsible for lobbying; although institutional presidents talk to their own representatives, they typically do so in the name of the system.

The Appropriations Committees in both houses have the most direct impact on higher education because this is where the budget deals are made. The Higher Education Committee in each chamber (in the House this is called the University System of Georgia Committee) technically has responsibility for policy issues, although in practice the Appropriations Committees, through their budget powers, also exert influence over policy matters. Each Appropriations Committee is divided into subcommittees for various areas of the budget, and typically the chair of the Higher Education Committee in each chamber chairs the Appropriations Subcommittee for the University System. This gives the chair of the Higher Education Committee more influence over higher education than similar positions have in most other states, where Higher Education Committees are disconnected from the appropriations process.

In general, however, the Assembly does not have that much influence in higher education, largely due to the constitutional status of the University System of Georgia. Because the system has constitutional autonomy, the only real levers are in cases of new money or new initiatives. According to one legislator, "The Higher Education Committee does not handle much legislation."

Because of constitutional autonomy, legislators and university administrators tend to agree that the Assembly has "kept its meddling in higher education to a minimum" and that it respects the authority and responsibilities of the Board of Regents. One legislator said, however, that the Assembly needs to do a better job of holding institutions accountable for the money they spend, even though the institutions have constitutional autonomy. "We don't have the oversight we should have from a policy perspective," he said. "We could be stronger within our existing system." Another legislator suggested that while there has not been much scrutiny of the money that was spent in previous years in higher education, those kinds of questions will soon be asked by legislators who want to see results. The chancellor has tried to anticipate these expectations by presenting a voluntary annual accountability report.

Higher Education History and Characteristics

Public higher education in Georgia began in 1784 when the General Assembly set aside land for the endowment of a college, which was to become the University of Georgia. At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, the state established a number of additional institutions, including the School of Technology, the Georgia Normal and Industrial College for Girls, and the Georgia State Industrial College for Colored Youths. In addition, the Assembly established agricultural and mechanical arts (or A & M institutions) in each congressional district. The institutions, established "in response to local needs," were scattered throughout the state.[12]

In 1929, Governor Hardman called for a committee to recommend the reorganization of higher education. As part of a larger effort by the General Assembly to simplify the operations of the executive branch of government, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia was established in 1931. The board was established with eleven members appointed by the Governor. The Governor served as an ex officio member. The system originally consisted of 26 institutions, ranging from universities, senior colleges, junior colleges, A & M schools, black colleges, and agricultural experiment stations.

The original statement of plan for the University System of Georgia said that the institutions should no longer function as separate, competitive entities. The intent was to unify and coordinate the work of the institutions, to integrate the educational program, and to free the state from wasteful duplication while still providing maximum educational opportunity.[13]

The Board of Regents operated under statutory authority from its inception until August 1943, when the state ratified a constitutional amendment establishing the board as a constitutional body. The vote came after ten institutions were disaccredited by the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges because of "unprecedented and unjustifiable political interference," particularly on the part of Governor Gene Talmadge. Talmadge is said to have requested the dismissal of several administrators and to have become very angry when the Regents failed to fulfill his request. The Governor called for the resignation of several members of the Board of Regents in order to replace them with men who would "do his bidding." A committee of the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges called for the disaccreditation of the institutions as a result of their investigation. In the gubernatorial election that followed the committee's report, Talmadge was defeated by Ellis Arnall, who "was committed to the university's re-

accreditation." Soon after taking office, Arnall submitted the amendment to grant constitutional authority to the Board of Regents.[14]

The new constitutionally autonomous board consisted of 15 members (ten from congressional districts, five from the state at large) and no longer included the Governor as an ex officio member. Board members were appointed by the Governor for seven-year terms.

The new constitutional status, meant to insulate the University System from undue political interference, gave the board the constitutional authority to govern, control and manage the system. This authority included: program approval or discontinuation, allocation of the budget, facilities construction, and decisions on adding, closing or merging institutions.

The system continued to change and grow over the next several decades. The composition of the University System changed significantly in the 1960s with unprecedented growth. New junior colleges, new degree programs and new facilities were all part of this expansion. Carl Sanders, the Governor at this time, has been referred to by many as an "education Governor" because his state budgets invested heavily in higher education facilities and helped to triple the size of the system.

When Georgia revised its state constitution in 1982, slight modifications were made to the constitutional status of the board. One of the main changes is that vacancies on the board can no longer be temporarily filled by appointment of the Regents; this is now the responsibility of the Governor. In addition, the General Assembly must approve the establishment of any new public college or university and any changes in the missions of such institutions. Assembly approval is not required for changes in institutional status for those institutions established before 1982.[15]

Most of our respondents agreed that since the Talmadge era, no Governor in Georgia has sought to interfere with the Board of Regents or to stack the board. Respondents did agree, however, that the Governor does have tremendous influence on higher education, and that the type of people the Governor appoints to the board determines the relative role of the board and the chancellor's office. For example, according to one long-time university administrator, when Jimmy Carter was Governor, he appointed a very activist Board of Regents, which resulted in a weak chancellor's office. Regents are subject to approval by the Senate, but this is said to be a pro forma confirmation. Only one individual has been turned down after being nominated by the Governor.

The University System of Georgia

The University System of Georgia today consists of 34 institutions, including 4 research universities, 2 regional universities, 13 state universities and senior colleges, and 15 two-year colleges. The system remains under a consolidated governing board, the Board of Regents, and is led by a system chancellor.

Board of Regents

The Board of Regents includes 16 members, all appointed by the Governor.[16] This includes one representative of each of the 11 congressional districts, as well as five from the state at large. Regents serve seven-year terms. The board meets monthly, typically at the Regents' office in Atlanta, though occasionally meetings are held at individual institutions.

The board is organized into six standing committees (executive; education, research and extension; real estate and facilities; financial and business; audit; organization and law; and strategic planning), with special committees created as needed. Committees make recommendations to the full board.

Several respondents agreed that in general, the Regents do not micro-manage, nor are they a rubber stamp for the chancellor's office. According to most of our respondents, the Regents primarily consider statewide concerns, leaving the day-to-day details to the central office and the chancellor. Generally, most significant decisions and negotiations are made between the Regents, the chancellor and the Governor. It is rare to have legislation approved by the Assembly if it has not been worked out with the Board of Regents in advance, according to one legislative staff member.

Chancellor

The system chancellor is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Board of Regents. The chancellor is the chief administrative officer of the system and the chief executive officer of the board. Institutional presidents report to the chancellor.

The chancellor has very broad powers and responsibilities, as defined by the bylaws of the University System of Georgia. The bylaws state that "all institutional recommendations regarding faculty, research, administrative, and other employee appointments shall be subject to the approval of the chancellor before being submitted to the board."[17] The chancellor also makes recommendations to the board concerning the appointment of institutional presidents and all employees of the central office.

The bylaws further state that the chancellor "shall be the medium through which all matters shall be presented to the board," including the suggested allocation of state appropriations to the institutions.[18] The chancellor also has the power to "limit the matriculates to the educational facilities at the institutions of the system."[19] The chancellor participates in all meetings and committees of the board, but does not have the authority to vote.

The current chancellor, Stephen Portch, took office in the summer of 1994. The arrival of Portch in Georgia was hailed by most of those we interviewed as a very significant moment for Georgia higher education. It had been over 30 years since the Board of Regents had gone

outside the state for their chancellor (Portch came from the University of Wisconsin). Second, Portch came in with a very aggressive agenda for change, something that the Regents welcomed. Third, he was well respected by the Governor and Assembly, and has been able to "get what he wants" from them in his first two years, according to one legislative staff member.

Portch is credited with communicating well with the political system. He "walks the halls" during the legislative session, staying in touch with the leadership and giving them confidence in him, according to one legislator. In addition, Portch has regular conversations with the Governor.

One of Portch's first actions was to assess the organization of the system office. Every process was reviewed to see what value was added, and as a result, some processes were discontinued. The new chancellor believed that too many vice chancellors had been appointed in response to specific problems, and the reorganization eliminated some of those positions. The chancellor's office was reorganized to send two primary messages, according to the chancellor. First, he wanted to emphasize the setting of priorities through out the system—in terms of academic programs, human resources and capital development. Second, he wanted to establish a habit of working across organizational units.

The principle role of the system office is to provide leadership, especially in the area of strategic planning, to advocate for resources for the system, and to make sure that money is spent well for higher education in Georgia. The system office has the authority to approve or deny new programs.

Institutional Presidents

Institutional presidents in Georgia are a step or two removed from the political process. Presidents are referred to as the chancellor's "policy advisors." Presidents serve on an advisory council that makes recommendations on educational and administrative matters to the chancellor and, through the chancellor, to the Board of Regents. The advisory council meets at least once a quarter and holds special meetings at the request of the chancellor.

The chancellor expects campus presidents to establish a consensus opinion for each major issue, speaking "with one voice" for the system. Presidents are asked to lobby individual legislators "in the name of the system" rather than for their own institution. "We are all a part of a single vision and we understand our individual role and mission within that vision," argued one campus president. The chancellor meets in a retreat format with presidents both in large groups and by institutional type (presidents of research universities, two-year colleges, etc.). Agendas at these meetings, said one president, are "very tangible and real," dealing with issues like budgets and planning. The last meeting, he said, dealt with strategies for working with public officials (i.e., how to talk with elected officials about past and future state investments in higher education).

These systemwide meetings do not appear to work as well for other groups of administrators. One administrator suggested that the structure does not necessarily lend itself to productive collaboration between institutions. For example, he said, there are many meetings with vice presidents from the 34 institutions that have no agenda, and when there is a substantive issue to discuss, the needs of the different institutions are so far apart that no decisions are made.

Several respondents noted that it is difficult for a board to get to know 34 individual institutions, particularly when institutional missions are so diverse. One observer suggested that the Regents would be hard-pressed to know much about the individual campuses, particularly since presidents do not always attend board meetings unless called in by the chancellor for a specific purpose. Another respondent suggested that while there are some tensions and difficulties in working with a centralized board, "It's worked reasonably well" in Georgia. One president said that there are times when he would like to be able to act more entrepreneurial and have more freedom, but "we've been able to work that out pretty effectively."

Because of the centralized nature of the system, the role of the various parties is very dependent on the individuals in the leadership positions. In periods in which there have been weak chancellors in the central office, institutional presidents have much more authority, according to one long-time administrator. A weak chancellor in the early 1990s, according to a number of our respondents, led to a great deal of mission creep among institutions as presidents sought to improve the "status" of their institutions, moving from two- to four-year institutions or from senior college to regional university.

System Characteristics

In the fall of 1995, there were over 206,000 students enrolled in University System institutions, making it the fourth largest system of public higher education in the country. This number is up from 136,000 students in 1985, an increase of 50 percent for the decade. Ninety percent of the enrollments were from residents of Georgia. Approximately 20 percent of the student population is African-American, and close to 37 percent attend on a part-time basis.[30]

As Table 3 shows, Georgia is below the national average (but average relative to other study states) with regard to its enrollment per 1,000 population and its enrollment per new high school graduate. This may reflect the fact that the state has not traditionally placed a great deal of emphasis on higher education.

Table 3

System Characteristics for Georgia Compared to Selected States

(Numbers in Parentheses Represent Rank Among the Seven Study States)

System Characteristics	*High (1–2)*	*Average (3–5)*	*Low (6–7)*	*U.S. Average*
Total Degree-Granting Institutions (1994–95)		119 (5)		
Public Four-Year Institutions (1994–95)		19 (4)		
Public Two-Year Institutions (1994–95)		53 (3)		
% of Enrollment in Public Institutions (1994)		79 (5)		78
FTE Students per 1,000 Population (Public Institutions Only) (1995–96)*		29.5 (5)		31.5
Participation Ratio: Public FTE Students per New High School Graduate (1995–96)*		3.20 (5)		3.28
% of High School Graduates Going on to Higher Education Anywhere (1994)†		57.6 (5)		57.3
State Appropriations plus Tuition per FTE Student (1995–96)*		$7,312 (3)		$7,020

Sources: Unless otherwise noted, data are drawn from *Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac* (September 1996), pp. 51–52.

* From Halstead, *State Profiles: Trend Data* (1996), pp. 21, 24.

† From K. Halstead, *Higher Education Report Card 1995* (Washington D.C.: Research Associates of Washington, 1996), p. 37.

The number of new high school graduates in the state is expected to grow from 70,930 in 1996–97 to 91,930 in 2006–07, an increase of 30 percent.[21] The chancellor's office projects that higher education enrollment will increase by approximately 11 percent by the year 2000. Growth in higher education enrollments is projected because of a growing population and a population of people moving into the state that tends to have higher college-going rates than native Georgians. In addition, the state is making a concerted effort to increase aspirations for college among high school graduates.

The institutions in the University System are divided into four categories: research universities, regional universities, state universities and senior colleges, and two-year colleges (see Table 4). The research universities include the University of Georgia, the Georgia Institute of Technology, the Medical College of Georgia, and Georgia State University. The two regional universities include Georgia Southern and Valdosta State. The state universities and senior colleges include 13 four-year institutions. There are 15 two-year colleges.

Table 4

Institutions in the University System of Georgia

Research Universities	***Regional Universities***
Georgia Institute of Technology	Georgia Southern University
Georgia State University	Valdosta State University
Medical College of Georgia	
University of Georgia	***Two-Year Colleges***
	Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College
State Univs. & Senior Colleges*	Atlanta Metropolitan College
Albany State College	Bainbridge College
Armstrong State Colleges	Brunswick College
Augusta College	Dalton College
Clayton State College	Darton College
Columbus College	DeKalb College
Fort Valley State College	East Georgia College
Georgia College	Floyd College
Georgia Southwestern College	Gainesville College
Kennesaw State College	Gordon College
North Georgia College	Macon College
Savannah State College	Middle Georgia College
Southern College of Technology	South Georgia College
West Georgia College	Waycross College

* In 1996, the University System began to refer to most of the senior colleges as "state universities" to reflect more accurately this type of institution. Several of the institutions' names were changed as well. The change was made after an external committee reviewed the mission of the entire system. This change does not reflect a change in mission of any of the institutions, only a change in nomenclature.

There is great variation in the size of Georgia's institutions of higher education. The two largest institutions, the University of Georgia and Georgia State University, have enrollments of 29,000 and 24,000 respectively. Of the senior colleges, only one institution (Kennesaw State) enrolls more than 10,000 students and most have enrollments of less than 5,000. DeKalb College is the largest of the two-year institutions with over 16,000 students; all other two-year colleges have enrollments under 5,000.

The growth in enrollments in Georgia over the last ten years has occurred primarily in the two-year colleges. These institutions saw a 156 percent increase in enrollment from 1985 to 1994.

During this same period, the research institutions grew by 14 percent, the regional universities by 73 percent and the senior colleges by 49 percent. While the research institutions' overall share of enrollments has declined, they still award the largest proportion of degrees in the state, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Distribution of Enrollments and Degrees Awarded In the University System, 1994

Category	*% of Enrollment*	*% of Degrees Awarded*
Research Universities	34	45
Regional Universities	11	12
State Universities and Senior Colleges	32	29
Two-Year Colleges	23	14

Source: University System of Georgia, *Information Digest*, pp. 22, 46.

In fiscal year 1995, the total budget for the University System was $2.2 billion, with $1.1 billion coming from state appropriations. This accounted for approximately 12.5 percent of the state budget. In fiscal year 1995, the system's four major research universities accounted for over 47 percent of the system's budget, compared with 19 percent for the senior colleges and 11 percent for the two-year colleges.[22]

The system plan adopted in 1990 defined the broad general roles of the different types of institutions in the system. Comprehensive universities are responsible for graduate education, professional education, research, and public service. Regional universities can establish doctoral programs, but they should be in specialized areas, responsive to the demands of the communities and compatible with institutional missions. Senior colleges offer baccalaureate programs that are not as comprehensive as those of universities; their faculty research is to be oriented toward instructional effectiveness. Graduate programs at the senior colleges are confined to the master's level in high demand areas. Two-year colleges offer the first two years of academic course work and are the primary provider of developmental studies.[23]

The division of responsibilities between these institutions, argued one president, is an example of the efficient allocation of resources that the system tries to accomplish through its different institutions. "Within reasonable limits the missions and programs of each institution are laid out pretty carefully so as not to conflict with the other institutions." In the research universities,

this means that the system offers one public medical school, one substantial graduate engineering program, and one institution with a strong investment in life sciences.

The category of "regional university" was established in 1990 with the designation of Georgia Southern to university status. Prior to this, the system had only research universities, four-year colleges and two-year colleges. The concept for this multi-campus regional university was proposed in 1989 as part of an effort to develop a strategic plan for higher education. The plan included several institutions in the southern part of the state, with the notion of forming a regional university to expand educational opportunities in the region, increase the prestige of the institution, and respond to the requests of the southern part of the state for a university.[24] The plan adopted in July 1990 designated Georgia Southern as a "regional university" with two additional colleges, Armstrong State and Savannah State, designated as "affiliates" of Georgia Southern. Each institution would remain independent, but would participate in the graduate and research activities of the new regional university. Presidents of the two colleges would also be "provosts" of Georgia Southern. In 1994, a report from the chancellor's office suggested that this affiliated arrangement be changed, and recommended several alterations. The new arrangement removed the designation as "affiliate" and authorized Armstrong State and Savannah State to offer graduate programs and confer graduate degrees. This change was not designed to eliminate cooperation among the three institutions, but rather to "vest" program authority more clearly. According to the chancellor's recommendations, "The modified arrangement holds the promise of meeting the original objective of providing the coordinated, regional approach to graduate programming."[25]

There is some concern in Georgia about the multiple distinctions between institutional types. Many of those we interviewed believe that the distinctions, particularly between senior colleges and regional universities, have very little meaning. According to an historian of the University System, "The University System's fifth growth period (1984 to 1990) witnessed a rapid turnover in institutional leadership, a loosening of centralized control, and a re-emergence of institutional aspirations. . . . Enrollments expanded in unprecedented ways, and institutional missions changed with or without deliberate planning or policy decisions."[26] According to this historian, this type of unexpected development was common throughout the system's history: "No observer, critical or uncritical, would contend that the University System of Georgia is the work of a master planner or the result of grand design."[27]

The constant push for change in institutional status, according to one administrator, is the result of a piecemeal approach to the coordination of higher education in the state. He said that without a plan for service delivery in a given area (for example, the Atlanta metropolitan area), "Institutions will just continue to define their own service areas and their own destinies." In response to concerns like these, the chancellor has recently established a Council of Presidents consisting of presidents in the Atlanta region to engage in collaborative planning.

"It is somewhat problematic to try to distinguish between regional universities and senior colleges," said one administrator. As a result, senior colleges are arguing that they should be

accorded this "increase in status." Part of the University System's mission review process was aimed at updating the nomenclature of institutions, and resulted in renaming most senior colleges as "state universities."

The continued tendency toward mission creep in the early 1990s angered the Board of Regents and led them, according to one administrator, to threaten changing the system, possibly by breaking it up and moving to more of a regional organization. Rather than carrying through with these threats, the board, once it became stronger with some new appointments, was successful in bringing in a new chancellor. The new chancellor and prominent legislators argue that they are trying to put a stop to these change-in-status efforts, and to try to get away from the terminology of status altogether.

Two-Year Colleges

There are 15 two-year colleges in the University System of Georgia. These institutions are considered to be more like traditional "junior colleges," providing the first two years of the baccalaureate curriculum. The colleges also offer vocational programs, but they have never been called community colleges and not every community has access to a two-year institution.

Including the two-year institutions in the University System has been a source of controversy almost since the establishment of the system in the 1930s. The Strayer Report, a commissioned report on the state of higher education in Georgia written in 1949, recommended separating the two-year colleges from the University System. The report suggested that the two-year colleges would be better served as local institutions under the supervision of the state Board of Education.[28]

Different views on the benefits of keeping two-year and four-year institutions in the same system remain. Some administrators said that the state has never "bought" the traditional community college system and this is a weakness. The two-year institutions are said to "hold the University System back" on many issues. The system spends an inordinate amount of time on transfer and the core curriculum, according to one administrator. He said that rather than looking at undergraduate education as a whole, system officials must look at the "lowest common denominator," general education. Others describe a sort of "leveling effect" when you have institutions of such widely different mission in the same system.

In contrast, others said that Georgia benefits from keeping two-year colleges within the University System. They said that since the consolidated system allows for greater cooperation, it is helpful to keep transfer and articulation within one statewide system. A faculty member said that there has been genuine system leadership in terms of the collaboration, especially regarding transfer, the establishment of a rising junior test, and mandated developmental studies. These efforts have made the system a more unified whole, he argued.

A senior system administrator argued that the system underuses and perhaps undervalues the two-year colleges. He said that there is a lack of clarity in the mission of the institutions. There is also, he said, a persistent belief that the two-year colleges are less important or less prestigious than their four-year counterparts.

The chancellor and the Regents, meanwhile, see the two-year colleges as the "cornerstone of access" and have made some efforts to encourage more students to begin their careers there. Last year, the system increased tuition at the four-year institutions by five percent, while reducing tuition at the two-year institutions by five percent. This change was partly in response to the fact that two-year college tuition in Georgia was high relative to the rest of the country, while four-year tuition was low. The chancellor was also trying, however, to encourage more students to start at the two-year institutions because there is capacity at those institutions that may not exist at other state institutions—such as the University of Georgia. According to one university official, defining more sharply the roles of two-year institutions and increasing the number of students starting at those institutions are attempts to align institutional welfare with public policy priorities. One of the challenges of statewide planning for a large, diverse system has been not only to keep some separation in terms of institutional mission, but also to have an orderly plan for growth.

Tuition Policy

Tuition policy in Georgia states that tuition should be 25 percent of the cost of instruction. As well as reducing tuition at the two-year colleges and increasing it at the four-year institutions, the system is also moving to significantly raise tuition for out-of-state students, asking those students to pay the full cost of their education by 1998. In fiscal year 1995, tuition averaged $1,995 at the research universities, $1,494 at the senior colleges and $1,020 at the two-year colleges. There were double-digit increases in tuition in the mid-1980s, but annual tuition increases have averaged about four percent for the past seven years. In general, students and their families in Georgia pay a smaller proportion of the cost of education (measured by state appropriations plus tuition) than the national average. In Georgia, students and their families contribute 24 percent of the total allocation, compared to a national average of 32 percent.[20]

Private Colleges and Universities

Georgia's 44 private colleges and universities accommodate approximately 21 percent of the state's higher education enrollments.[21] There is a great variety of institutions, from small religious colleges and women's colleges to institutions like Emory and Mercer, which are major research universities. This group also includes some of the nation's most prestigious historically black colleges and universities. According to one state official, "Private institutions provide an education that is not available in the public institutions," particularly through the religious and military institutions.

There are differences of opinion as to the relationship between the public and private institutions in the state. "Georgia does not have as much history of animosity between public and private institutions," said one representative of the private institutions. But according to a representative of the University System, "There is a fair amount of tension" between the two because of competition for state dollars.

Private institutions have a lobbying organization called the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Georgia. Approximately 25 institutions belong to this association. This group focuses primarily on maintaining information on and support for the tuition equalization grants, on keeping the General Assembly informed about private institutions, and on fine-tuning the HOPE scholarship program.

The Governor recognizes the value of the independent colleges and universities and the role that they can play in the state, said one state official. He said that in general, the University System is dominant and that most native Georgians assume that higher education *is* the University System of Georgia. He said, "The orientation of the Legislature is also toward the University System and not as much tied to the privates."

There has been some evidence, said one institutional administrator, that private institutions are becoming more entrepreneurial and attracting students to their campuses, relieving some of the increased demand in the state. However, financial aid awards brought about by the lottery (see section on financial aid) may make Georgia's private institutions look outside of the state for enrollments. According to one private college president, many Georgia residents who may have opted for a private institution before are now looking to the public institutions because it is so economically effective to do so. He said that some private institutions may become increasingly less Georgia-focused as a result.

There are some collaborative arrangements between public and private institutions in Georgia, including some cross-registration programs and some sharing of library resources. Representatives of the private colleges and universities predict even greater cooperation over the next decade to prevent duplication of programs. One University System administrator discussed a collaboration that occurred when the state ran short of slots in medical school and they bought some slots from the private institutions. Most collaboration between the publics and the privates, however, occurs locally. One University System official said that since there is no uniform data collection in the independent colleges and universities, it is difficult for the state to know how effectively those institutions are being used.

One of the best examples of collaboration between public and private institutions is through the organization called the University Centers of Georgia. This organization is composed of public and private institutions in the Atlanta area, and also includes the University of Georgia at Athens. There are 17 to 18 institutions of all types in the University Centers organization. Presidents of the member institutions act as chair of the organization, with the position rotating

annually. The purpose of the group is to bring institutions together and to find areas for collaboration.

The group has been well received by deans, librarians and faculty, said one respondent, but it has been less well received among the presidents.

Activities of the University Centers organization include: a cross-registration program, through which students can transfer credits back and forth between member institutions; a speaker series; and an inter-library loan program where schools within the area arrange to loan their materials to other institutions.

Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE)

The Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE) includes 34 technical institutes which provide adult literacy training, continuing education, customized training for business and industry, and technical education to the associate degree level.[31] In fiscal year 1995, DTAE enrolled 223,450 students, including 69,327 in credit courses and 154,123 in non-credit courses. DTAE is governed by a 16-member board that is appointed by the Governor. As with the Board of Regents, this board includes one member from each of the 11 congressional districts, and 5 at-large members. In fiscal year 1996, DTAE received $205 million from state funds, which amounts to less than two percent of the state budget.

Financial Aid

A lot of the excitement that is evident in Georgia higher education derives from the financial support brought about by the state lottery. As mentioned earlier, the lottery was a key component in the platform of Governor Miller, and his promise to keep the lottery money as a supplement to (not a replacement for) education dollars has been maintained.

The Governor is said to "jealously guard" the use of lottery money for three specific initiatives: a focus on pre-kindergarten at-risk children; an emphasis on technology; and the scholarships for students in higher education called Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally, or HOPE. The Governor was said to be interested in two things with these scholarships: increasing participation in post-secondary education while simultaneously improving performance.

HOPE scholarships were described by the chancellor as "Georgia's GI Bill." Students who earn a 3.0 grade point average (GPA) in high school are eligible for full tuition, fees, and books at any University System institution, or any institution in the Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE) system. If a student maintains that 3.0 average in college, they continue to receive the scholarship for four years. Initially there was an income cap on students who were eligible (students had to come from families where the family income was $100,000 or less) but that has since been removed. In addition, changes made in 1996 (to go into effect

for the entering class of the year 2000) call on students to have a 3.0 GPA in the core disciplines in high school, an attempt to further increase the standards and improve the preparation of students for college. Currently, about 50 percent of high school graduates have an average of B or better in all courses, and thus would be eligible for HOPE scholarships under today's guidelines. The change to requiring this average in the core disciplines is expected to significantly reduce the percentage of graduates who are eligible.[32]

HOPE scholarships are also available to Georgia residents who attend private institutions. Initially, students did not need to maintain a certain grade point average to be eligible for the $1,500 award, but this was the subject of a great deal of debate during our visit. Many legislators and others said that there were standards that students at public institutions were being held to that students at the privates were not. As a result of these concerns, changes will be made to the program beginning in fall 1996. Under the new requirements, students will have had to maintain B averages in high school to be eligible for HOPE scholarships at private institutions. By the year 2,000, students at private institutions will have to maintain B averages while in college in order to retain their HOPE scholarships.

In fiscal year 1995, there were approximately $86 million in the HOPE program, with approximately $119 million projected for fiscal year 1996. Approximately $159 million are expected for 124,000 HOPE scholarships in 1996–97.[33]

For the most part, those we spoke with were not concerned about what would happen when the lottery begins to dry up; people expect the lottery to continue to grow in the foreseeable future. There are some provisions, however, for dealing with shortfalls, including two reserve accounts. State law calls for the establishment of a "scholarships shortfall reserve subaccount" to be maintained to address possible shortfalls in lottery proceeds from year to year. The law says that ten percent of the total lottery proceeds disbursed in the form of scholarships or grants for higher education in the preceding fiscal year must be deposited into a reserve subaccount. This must occur every year until the subaccount equals 50 percent of the disbursements from the previous year. This money can then be drawn upon in any year that net proceeds from the lottery are not sufficient to meet the amount appropriated for scholarships. A second reserve subaccount is to be maintained in the amount equal to ten percent of the total amount of lottery proceeds for the previous year. This account can be drawn upon in any year when the net proceeds from the lottery are not sufficient to meet the amount appropriated for education purposes.[34]

Since its inception in 1993, over 191,000 students have received HOPE scholarships. In 1995–96, 43,150 students at University System institutions, 43,840 students at technical institutes, and 29,640 students at independent institutions had HOPE scholarships.[35] Approximately 20 percent of the students (by head-count enrollment) at University System institutions received HOPE scholarships in 1995–96. In addition, over 90 percent of the Georgia resident freshmen at the University of Georgia and the Georgia Institute of Technology received HOPE scholarships that year.[36]

Additional HOPE dollars are given to students who plan to go into teaching (and maintain a 3.6 or better GPA), as well as to graduate students in a small number of high-demand teacher education areas. The goal of these programs is to attract the best students as teachers in Georgia.

The HOPE scholarships are significant because they represent the first time the state has placed a high priority on attending college. The scholarships are "the most dramatic thing that has happened in terms of public policy for higher education in recent years," according to a private college president. While the evidence is still primarily anecdotal, several of our respondents said they believe that the HOPE program has increased awareness about higher education and has improved participation in a traditionally low-participation state. Parents have also become more concerned about student performance in high school and college, said one state official. There have been some enrollment increases, but as yet there is no statewide analysis to determine the real impact of HOPE. Some people argue that there has been some grade inflation in the high schools as a result of the HOPE program, but most of our respondents said they are not concerned with that. The priority, they argued, is to increase aspirations and expectations about attending college, and they believe that HOPE is doing that.

Ironically, the success of the HOPE program may counteract some of the efforts of the current University System administration to encourage more students to utilize the two-year colleges. Since HOPE pays for full tuition, the students have less of a financial incentive to begin their college careers at the two-year institutions if they are eligible for a four-year institution.

The impact of the HOPE program on financial aid in Georgia has been significant. As Table 6 indicates, the advent of lottery funds in fiscal year 1994 led to growth of more than 700 percent in total state dollars for student financial aid in Georgia between 1990 and 1996.

Table 6

State Fund and Lottery Fund Expenditures for Financial Aid

Fiscal Year	*State Funds**	*Lottery Funds*	*Total*
1990	$22,361,866	$0	$22,361,866
1991	$23,487,907	$0	$23,487,907
1992	$22,255,820	$0	$22,255,920
1993	$26,471,399	$0	$26,471,399
1994	$28,848,654	$23,079,341	$51,927,995
1995	$33,236,353	$74,615,666	$107,852,019
1996	$36,180,074	$146,998,145	$183,178,219

* State funds include those distributed by the Georgia Student Finance Commission. There are additional funds for student financial aid given directly in the Board of Regents and DTAE budgets.

Source: Georgia Student Finance Commission, 1997.

There is no direct state aid to independent colleges in Georgia, but students attending the independent institutions receive state grants in two ways. Tuition equalization grants provide Georgia residents who attend an independent college or university with $1,000 from the state for that purpose. This program had "languished" for many years, according to one state official, and "was becoming almost irrelevant." That changed somewhat when the HOPE scholarships were introduced and a provision was put in for students who wished to attend private institutions. Georgia residents who choose to attend private colleges and universities receive $1,500 per year from the HOPE scholarship fund (in addition to their $1,000 tuition equalization grant). With the addition of this money, argued one state official, the use of aid to encourage students to attend private institutions has been somewhat "revitalized." In fiscal year 1996–97, the HOPE grant for students at private institutions will increase to $3,000, further revitalizing the effort to make the private institutions more attractive to students. However, many of our respondents still believe that the HOPE scholarships make public institutions so attractive (because tuition is free to those who qualify for the scholarships) that students are less likely to take their HOPE scholarship to an independent institution.

In addition to HOPE and the tuition equalization grants, there are a number of smaller grant programs operated by the Georgia Student Finance Commission. Most of these are targeted to particular areas, such as military scholarships, law enforcement grants, and other small, legislative initiatives.

Interestingly, the Georgia Student Finance Commission has not seen a decline in the volume of loans being taken out by students, even with the implementation of the HOPE scholarships. Interviewees speculated that the HOPE scholarship may serve a clientele that was not taking out loans before. Respondents also said that students are still borrowing to pay for room and board expenses.

Work Processes

The University System of Georgia is coordinated by the chancellor's office and Board of Regents through a series of processes that evolve from the board's responsibilities for planning and budgetary activities. The current administration has been particularly active and is using the coordinating processes to set new priorities and to redirect the system toward those priorities.

Strategic Planning Initiatives

Strategic planning, which is the responsibility of the Board of Regents and the chancellor's office, has been a cornerstone of the current chancellor's administration. According to many respondents, the new chancellor had a "window of opportunity" in Georgia when he arrived—with a strong economy, a supportive Governor and General Assembly, and institutions "refreshingly ready for change." In moving quickly to inaugurate his agenda for change, the chancellor initiated the development of a mission/vision statement and a strategic planning process to move the system forward. Most of those we interviewed suggested that the initiatives developed from this process reflect the goals and priorities of the state. These, however, are said to be driven primarily by two people: the chancellor and the Governor. According to one university official, the current state priorities for higher education feature three themes: addressing the needs of the state and distinguishing between the needs and the wants of institutions; placing greater emphasis on working and acting as a system; and emphasizing excellence and quality.

The vision statement, entitled "Access to Academic Excellence for the New Millennium," was developed by consulting the board and the presidents. In separate groups, board members and presidents were asked to identify system issues and priorities, and to provide a vision for the direction which the system should move in the next century. The results of the separate deliberations were said to be similar, and the vision statement was developed from these ideas.

The vision statement suggests that the University System be characterized by "a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts"; "active partnerships with business and industry, cultural and social organizations, and government"; leadership in establishing higher state standards for post-secondary education"; and "the continuing improvement of every unit and of the System as a coordinated whole" through a constitutional board that "requires full accountability from all and that insures responsible stewardship."[7]

Accompanying the vision statement is a set of "guiding principles for strategic action" that are said to guide all policy decisions. One university administrator suggested that the principles "provide the foundation for launching policy directives." These principles are broken down into such areas as: academic excellence and recognition, development of human resources, efficient use of resources, system strength through governance, and effective external partnerships. The chancellor and Regents developed a set of policy directives or initiatives that directly relate to these guiding principles.

The system established a three-phase process for implementing its "change agenda," with each phase lasting about a year. The first phase involved the development of the vision and guiding principles, as well as the specific policy initiatives. The second phase includes the charge to the campuses to develop implementation plans for the different initiatives identified by the board. Task forces on the campuses, composed of students, faculty and community representatives, are responsible for implementation. Through this process, the board sets its direction, and the institutions develop plans in response to those directions. The third phase is the institutionalization phase, where the new initiatives become part of the institutional culture.

The initiatives put forward by the chancellor and the Board of Regents have covered a wide range of issues in higher education. These include: a mission development and review process with a coordinated reformation of missions for all institutions; an admissions initiative that calls for stronger coordinated admissions requirements throughout the system; the creation of active partnerships between the University System and K–12 schools, businesses, and other organizations; a partnership with the Department of Technical and Adult Education; a preschool-to-college (P–16) initiative that aims for a systemic collaboration among all sectors of education; movement toward a semester calendar; faculty and staff development including a post-tenure review system; a new tuition policy; and several other processes. Although campus presidents were consulted on these initiatives, most of the consultation took place by fax; presidents often had about a week to offer comments on initiatives before they were brought to the board. Once developed, the initiatives were issued as very concise statements that listed goals, tied those goals to the strategic planning directives, and suggested some general courses of action for the system and its institutions, but left the implementation design up to the institutions.

The agenda was defined by one legislator as on-going, one that looks to raise standards and to ensure more efficient use of resources. Throughout the process, according to the legislator, there is an effort to make decisions for the university as a whole rather than to foster competition among the separate elements. In all of these initiatives, then, there is a great deal of emphasis on working and acting as a system. The initiatives that got the most attention from the individuals we spoke with included the partnership with the Department of Technical and Adult Education, the P–16 initiative, and the attempt to raise academic standards.

Partnership with DTAE

The partnership between the University System and the Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE) is seen as significant because traditionally there has been a fair amount of animosity between these two systems. DTAE includes 33 institutions and enrolls close to 70,000 students in credit programs. There was competition between the two-year colleges and the technical institutes over whether the technical institutes should be able to offer associate degrees and whether they should have courses that are transferable to University System institutions. There are some in the state who think that the technical institutes should come under the Board of Regents, and others who believe the two-year colleges should be under the Department of Technical and Adult Education. The agreement between the chancellor of the University System and the commissioner of DTAE suggests that students should be able to move appropriately between systems but with a concentration on general education in the University System and on job-entry occupational instruction in DTAE.

The agreement between the two systems was a milestone in that it addressed for the first time the conflicts between these two systems, particularly as they relate to the two-year institutions. A council of presidents and academic officers from both systems was formed to help resolve issues of transfer and articulation between systems. As part of this agreement, articulation agreements were worked out where local recommendations are reported to this central council, where decisions are made that bind both systems. The main objective, according to the chancellor, is to get students to start in the right system.

There were two primary reasons for establishing this agreement, according to one respondent. First, it was pragmatic and good for the state, particularly since some technical institutions are across the street from two- or four-year institutions. Secondly, if the system had not addressed this themselves, the Assembly likely would have done so for them because there was concern with excessive program duplication.

Preschool-to-College (P–16) Policy Directive

This initiative attempts to link the entire educational system toward a set of common goals. The Governor is said to be one of the biggest supporters of the P–16 initiative because he is interested in moving toward a seamless educational system. The chancellor has set up P–16 councils in local communities in an attempt to raise the level of educational achievement in the state. The councils are developing plans for collaborative arrangements between elementary, secondary and higher education to address local educational needs.

In addition, a statewide P–16 council was appointed by the Governor to provide policy recommendations and leadership dealing with two specific goals: reforming teacher education and raising curricular standards at all levels, with specific emphasis on students who are considered to be "at-risk" in academic situations.[38]

New Admissions Standards

The recent shift in philosophy for standards, said one campus administrator, "has caused the most heartburn." According to a 1995 initiative, the University System had been operating (since the 1980s) under a dual set of minimum standards that were "little different from totally open admissions."

In 1984, the University System adopted a set of requirements for admission to its institutions. Beginning in 1988, students were "required" to complete a college preparatory curriculum for admission to any institution within the University System. The course requirements were approved by the Board of Regents and endorsed by the state Board of Education.[30] The curriculum required: four units of English; three units each of science, mathematics and social sciences; and two units of foreign languages. Specific instructional emphases in each of these areas were outlined by the board. Individual institutions could set higher standards than those listed, but all were supposed to use these minimum standards.

Institutions were allowed, however, to maintain a second, "provisional" admissions category, and most did so. In fall 1994, some 19 percent of freshmen in the University System had not met the appropriate college preparatory curriculum in at least one area. The percentages of students without these requirements were very small in the research institutions (less than one percent), and then progressively higher in the regional universities, senior colleges, and two-year colleges.

The 1995 initiative criticized the previous board policy as allowing "institutions to accept any number of [college preparatory curriculum] deficiencies even though it defines the college preparatory curriculum as 'essential' for college level work." The initiative goes on to call the system's current requirements "a high school counselor's nightmare" and argues for the need to "raise the bar of expectations" for incoming students and raise requirements for students taking the pre-college curriculum.

Under the new initiative, all institutions, including the two-year institutions, are expected to decrease the percentage of students who come into college without the pre-college curriculum. In addition, the initiative calls for different levels of standards by sector "rather than the lowest common denominator minimum." That is, it suggests that admission standards should be more relaxed at the two-year colleges, with progressively more stringent standards at the senior colleges and research universities. Essentially, the only true "open door" institutions under this new initiative would be the technical and adult institutions.

The language of the initiative also stresses the need for this to be a "companion piece" to the P–16 initiative, particularly as the P–16 efforts are aimed at pre-college programs to improve student preparation.

Assessment of Initiative Efforts

Many respondents agreed that the chancellor has used a top-down approach in developing these initiatives; but they also agreed that this is primarily because his "window of opportunity" is small. Partly because most people think that the initiatives and the direction of the system make sense, the top-down approach has not been questioned. A president said that the initiatives have been well received on campuses, particularly because there were many tangible benefits from the budget initiatives the previous year. Most people are "numb" from all of the activity, says one administrator, and it is difficult to keep up with all of it. Faculty have been "stunned" by the speed with which the changes are taking place, particularly since they have had little involvement in the development of the policy directions, he argues. They have, however, been involved in the development of the implementation plans.

There is not complete agreement in the state on the value of these initiatives, however. For example, a faculty member said that the initiatives are not dealing with the right issues and that the system is distracted by minor issues (like post-tenure review and conversion to a semester system) without addressing more important statewide concerns. The initiatives are a "poor guideline to the future," this individual argued. The greatest resistance to these initiatives, according to one observer, comes from those who have been in the system for a long time and who are more wary of dramatic change.

In general, however, people were very positive about the initiatives and other actions of the chancellor's office. A college administrator said the chancellor has tried to bring some logic to the policy- and decision-making process. "He [the chancellor] earned a mandate to be an agent for change from the Legislature, the Governor, and the college presidents," said one representative from private higher education. Many feel that this mandate has come about because of the strong communication between the chancellor's office and the Governor and Assembly. One political staff member suggested that the chancellor is the impetus for most of the priorities, but that the Governor is clearly supportive and that most of the priorities are probably taken to the Governor before they are finalized to get his support.

Many said they had believed there would be a short "honeymoon" period during which the chancellor would make a big splash and then begin to lose steam, but after a year and a half no one has seen much slowing down. There is some concern, however, that while the ideas are all positive, something tangible needs to come from them. The chancellor has done the right thing by raising the issues, said one state official, and he has made just enough decisions to reassure people, but most things are "being studied." The details on many of the initiatives were still to be worked out at the time of our visit, and some people said that the implementation phase would be the real test for the chancellor. Since that time, detailed implementation plans have been approved by the board for each new policy direction. These implementation plans were developed by task forces of faculty, staff and students. According to one administrator, there is a sense of urgency to the implementation plans, because "Portch has to deliver; he cannot just be seen as a person with ideas."

Budget Process

State appropriations for higher education include three appropriations: one for the University System of Georgia, one for the Georgia Student Finance Commission, and one for the Department of Technical and Adult Education. Appropriations for the Student Finance Commission include money appropriated from the Lottery for Education account (specifically for the HOPE scholarships), as well as general fund moneys for other state scholarship programs.

The state budget for the University System of Georgia is divided into two main components. The A budget, which includes 90 to 95 percent of the state appropriations to the University System, includes the instructional budget and is formula driven. This money goes to the Board of Regents for allocation to the institutions. The formulas, developed in 1982 and first implemented in 1984, are used to request funds from the state and to appropriate funds in a lump sum back to the Board of Regents; the formulas are not used to allocate money to individual institutions. The B budget is the non-formula piece and includes funding for special initiatives that goes directly to the institutions. The budget battles and negotiations that take place usually are over the B budget.

The formulas are based on credit hours per quarter and have a differential for instructional level (lower, upper, graduate/professional) and program area. The formulas also include provisions for operation and maintenance of the physical plant and for quality improvement programs. The formulas are "enrollment driven and square footage driven," according to one legislative staff member. The total state appropriations request is the total generated by the formulas less the revenue from student tuition and fees and other institutional revenues. Tuition and fees are set at 25 percent of the formulas for instructional, academic services and student services support.

Faculty salaries are also part of the formula budget, but only once a rate increase is agreed upon. Faculty salaries have been a top priority in the budget process for the past few years. The Governor, the University System and the Assembly have committed to raising faculty salaries in Georgia to get them to the top of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) states. The Governor has committed to increase faculty salaries six percent per year for four consecutive years; to date, two six-percent increases have been granted.

The Regents submit a unified budget to the Governor. The Regents' request comes in several pieces: first, the formula budget, where they must provide justifications for rate increases; second, the general obligation bond request, where they have regular priority projects, pay-back projects, and minor capital outlay projects; third, the salary request, which is inserted into the formal budget once a rate increase is agreed upon; and fourth, special initiatives for improvement.

The Office of Planning and Budget, which is the Governor's budget office, receives the Regents' request and develops the Governor's budget request. Individuals in the Education Development Division at the Office of Planning and Budget, as they consider the Regents' request, communicate primarily with policy and budget officials from the University System office, not with staff from the individual institutions. Once developed, the Governor's budget is submitted to the Assembly, which, according to one state official, typically makes additions to (rather than subtractions from) the Governor's budget. There is typically not much negotiation or argument over the formula request; most of the legislative battles are over the special requests in the B budget. The Governor has line-item veto power in Georgia, and can veto special initiatives. He must veto an entire item, however, and cannot just reduce funding amounts.

Once the Assembly and Governor have approved a budget, the Board of Regents makes allocations to individual institutions. These allocations, according to most of the individuals we spoke with, are primarily based on the previous year's budget. The Regents do, however, take into accoûnt possible changes in income. For example, when two-year college tuition was lowered by five percent in fiscal year 1996, the system made sure that the institutions' overall budgets were not hurt by the reduction in tuition income. The allocation responsibilities of the board are a key ingredient to the influence of that body, according to one university official. While the Governor and Assembly can state some priorities that they have for the allocation of dollars, the Regents are free to allocate as they see fit. The Regents' budget allocation process is very political in its own right, said one legislative staff member, but the politics occur between institutions and the board rather than with the Assembly or Governor. Because of this, it is difficult for the Governor or Assembly to institute real policy changes, said one official.

To address the Governor's requirement for redirection of funds in the 1995–96 budget, the Board of Regents said that they would use the increase in new formula money (which amounted to a 1.7 percent increase) for incentive purposes. The Regents asked for proposals for collaborative activities or for programs that would establish patterns of national excellence. Approximately 21 collaborative activities and 3 "patterns of national excellence" were funded in the fiscal year 1996 budget.

Also in the 1995–96 budget session, the Governor recommended funding for eight special initiatives for the University System. These initiatives were "student centered (and) technology driven" and amounted to $43.8 million.[40] These initiatives included activities such as "connecting teachers and technology" and advanced technological equipment for classrooms and laboratories at two-year institutions. In addition, a provision for "one statewide library" was funded to establish a systemwide—and ultimately a statewide—electronic library.

The shift toward special funding initiatives continued with the fiscal year 1997 request, which called for special funding in areas such as the P–16 reform effort, facilities master planning, renovation and rehabilitation of facilities, and model classrooms for the regional universities and the two- and four-year colleges.[41]

According to the chancellor, the adoption of special funding initiatives is an important change in the budget process. Instead of distributing the increases based on enrollment growth, the new budget uses incentives to reflect state priorities. The intent is to develop a culture of collaboration among the institutions. The system is "trying to get away from an enrollment-driven formula and focus more on quality," said one state official. Another suggested that it is "somewhat unprecedented" for the system to get such large amounts of money for special initiatives, and that the state is "grappling" with what to do about this, particularly in terms of continuation of funding for these special programs. "The chances for funding for this year's [fiscal year 1997] new initiatives are going to be slim," said one state official, because of the tight budget year and the call for a major redirection of funds.

Despite this prediction, the initiatives were all funded—though not at the level requested by the Regents. The Regents' request called for $65 million for special initiative funding; the Governor's budget request was for $19 million in special initiatives and the final budget provided $16.5 million for these initiatives. A significant part of the difference between the Regents' request and the final funding was in the area of support for renovation and rehabilitation: the Regents had asked for a significant increase in funding for major repair and rehabilitation projects, but the policy-makers saw the increase as too much too fast. Rather than the $30 million initially requested for the initiative, the University System received $6 million in additional funds in this area.

The emphasis on these initiatives and incentives is problematic for some administrators in the system. According to a state official, many presidents are concerned that money is being taken away from enrollment. He said that while presidents all support the "party line" on these initiatives, there is some grumbling beneath the surface. An administrator said that there are advantages to the initiatives, but the "concern we have is the extent to which special-targeted, earmarked initiatives are beginning to dominate flexible formula funding." Earmarks go for good things, she argued, but they end up costing resources as well because the earmark never quite provides for all of the program. "And then what happens," she said, "is you're short on formula money" and you have difficulty meeting some of your core objectives.

With the new strategic planning initiatives from the Board of Regents, said one state official, every budget request refers back to a set of strategic planning goals. This is appreciated in the political process, he argued, because it clarifies how everything ties into the overall strategic plan.

Program Review and Approval

All proposals for new programs must come to the Board of Regents through its education committee. The process was described as "fairly rigorous." Essentially, the proposal goes first to the chancellor and his staff for preliminary screening. It is then reviewed by the board and, if approved, it is developed into a final proposal, which also goes to the board. At any time in the

process, according to one president, another institution can raise questions about whether the program would be duplicative or whether it is educationally sound. All those questions are aired through the review process. "It does cause some tension, but basically I think that the process has worked reasonably well," he said.

The program review process is also currently in transition. The process has been changed to add a probationary period for new programs: that is, programs may be approved on a probationary basis and then allowed to develop over four or five years before receiving final approval.

The mission review process currently underway may also trigger some changes in program review. An external committee is studying the mission of the entire system and then trying to establish specific identities or missions for each institution.

Information Systems

There are different interpretations of the extent to which good information is made available by the University System. A legislator said that to his knowledge, there is not a great deal of information coming from the system to the Assembly. This information may be available, he acknowledged, but he has not seen it. A state official pointed out that the Board of Regents is a bureaucracy and that it is often difficult to get information from them. "It can take a long time to get any information to make a policy decision," he said. Differences in institutions and the way they gather information make cross-institution comparisons difficult, said this official, even though Georgia has a consolidated system. With advances in technology, he said, some of this seems to be getting better.

There are few reporting requirements within the system, said one official, and faculty and presidents like this because they do not have to produce many reports. One president argued that information is collected and that while it is not used to a significant extent in the decision-making process it is available if anyone wants it.

There is currently no accountability legislation in the state, though many of those we interviewed said that legislators are interested in accountability and assurances about the use of their money. "Accountability is really hands-off," said one legislative staff member. "The issue of accountability is one that we . . . feel strongly about and have tried to address before the Legislature comes to us with specific mandates," said one University System official.

Regents Examination

In 1973, the University System implemented a new requirement for graduation from its institutions: students would have to demonstrate competence in the areas of reading and writing if they were to receive an undergraduate (associate or baccalaureate) degree. A two-part

test is administered to all students and includes a reading and essay section. Students who have earned 75 quarter hours of college credit and have not passed both parts of the exam must take remedial reading and/or writing courses until they have passed both tests. In 1993–94, approximately 72 percent of the students passed the Regents' test on their first attempt; almost 50 percent of those who repeated the test eventually passed it.

Transfer and Articulation

Those we interviewed agreed that the transfer process works fairly well between the institutions within the University System. "There have been few complaints about transfer in this state," said one university official. Part of the reason for this may be that the University System institutions share a core curriculum, which is easier to require and implement under a consolidated board than under most other governance structures.

Approximately 5,000 students transferred from two- to four-year institutions in fiscal year 1994. Over one-quarter of these students came from DeKalb College, which is more than three times the size of the next largest two-year institution. Forty-four percent of all transfers from two-year institutions transferred to one of the four research universities, with the majority going to either Georgia State or the University of Georgia.[42]

Transfer between DTAE and University System institutions has not worked as well, partly because these systems do not share the same core curriculum. The new arrangement between the University System and DTAE is designed to increase the emphasis on program articulation between these two systems. Agreements can be made at the local level, but must be approved by both the DTAE board and the Board of Regents.

Concluding Observations

Most of those we interviewed think that the Georgia system works pretty well and that the consolidated structure creates many opportunities for a strong statewide system. The structure is praised for bringing about efficiency (control of program duplication), collaboration, and an effective strategic planning process. However, these strengths are most pronounced when there is strong leadership both in the chancellor's and Governor's office; under weak leadership, there have been problems in some of these areas.

Mission designation is the responsibility of the chancellor's office, and under a strong chancellor the system has been able to keep mission creep and duplication of programs to a minimum. The system has been particularly effective at keeping down duplication at the graduate level. There have been problems in the past, however, with mission creep. When there is weak leadership in the chancellor's office, institutional interests can tend to overtake statewide interests. Constitutional status prevents the Assembly from stepping in on such occasions.

The Georgia structure has been effective in getting institutions to collaborate with one another and to speak with one voice, particularly in their relationships with the General Assembly. As one campus president said, "The system helps to increase the likelihood that we will share a vision among institutions." The structure has mechanisms for establishing one tuition policy and one transfer policy with relative ease. However, there is some belief that the consolidated structure has underutilized its two-year institutions. This may be one reason that overall costs per student in Georgia are higher than the national average.

There is not complete agreement about the extent to which a consolidated structure allows for more collegiality on the one hand or creates an atmosphere of turf and competition on the other. Several individuals said that there is less turf orientation in this state than in most, and the emphasis and priority on collaborative activities helps to keep this at bay. Others suggest that there is always some unhappiness when it comes to resource allocation, since this is where the major policy decisions are made. Conflicts over whether one type of institutions is favored over another may be magnified under a centralized board with resource allocation responsibilities.

Under strong leadership, the Georgia structure is able to use a centralized planning process to address statewide priorities, as evidenced by the current strategic planning process initiated by

the chancellor's office. Weak faculty organizations contribute to the system's ability to plan on a statewide basis. The centralized planning and decision-making process has enabled the system to act quickly on its many initiatives, though this often means forgoing the deliberative process that higher education typically uses. Several respondents argued that the kinds of changes that are being implemented in Georgia are instituted much more effectively with a strong, top-down chancellor than under legislative controls, which is what they see as the alternative.

Most respondents said that constitutional status removes the system from political interference and keeps it free to focus on the mission of higher education. Some of the individuals we spoke with noted, however, that since Governors can now succeed themselves, a Governor could potentially appoint the entire Board of Regents over the course of two terms, which could lead to greater political influence.

It is difficult for private institutions to play a key policy role in a system like Georgia's since higher education is generally viewed as the University System. HOPE scholarships, though they are available to students attending private colleges and universities, provide such an incentive to attend public institutions that some privates may lose in-state enrollments.

The unitary structure is very dependent upon leadership. "This is the ideal structure for true leadership people in higher education to function effectively" noted a former president, who also said, "It can also go in a negative direction, depending on the leaders." Under weak leadership, the system has failed to act like a system, and has been more characterized by mission creep than by collaboration and effective strategic planning.

The Georgia system had a great deal of momentum and energy at the time of this study—with an interested Governor, a supportive General Assembly and a visionary chancellor who is widely admired and respected. The state economy has also been strong. When the "stars" are aligned like this, the structure has been able to plan effectively, move forward quickly and keep everyone fairly satisfied with the performance of higher education.

Appendix

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Notes

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[12] C. Fincher, *The Historical Development of the University System of Georgia: 1932–1990* (Athens, GA: Institute of Higher Education, 1991), p. 4. The discussion in this section draws heavily from this book and from the summary included in University System of Georgia, *Information Digest, 1994–95*, p. 8.
[13] University System of Georgia, *Information Digest, 1994–95*, p. 8.
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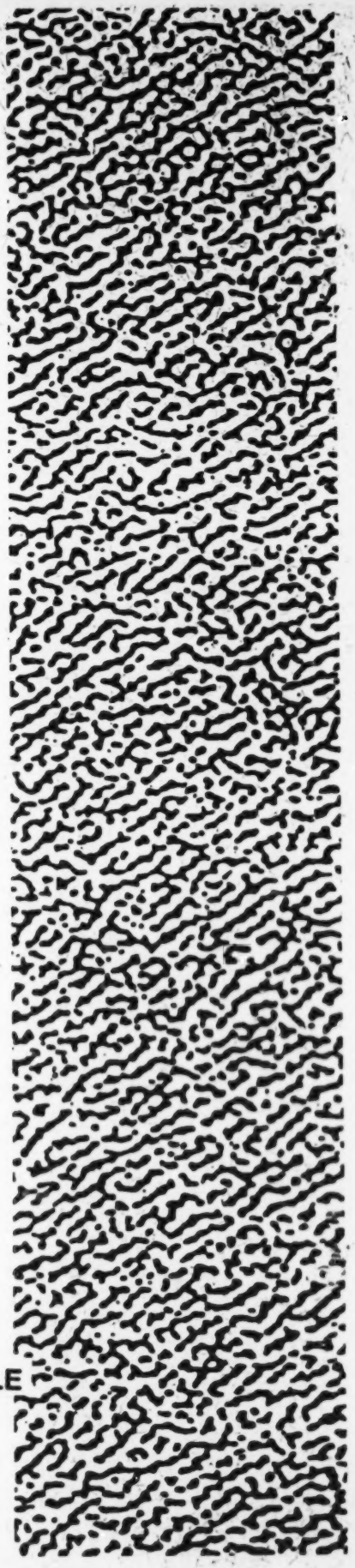

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